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ABSTRACT

This investigation of educational policy for child care facilities identifies 18 areas of school operation that would benefit from written policy statements and suggests 6 procedures to use in formulating policy. Interviews with 6 child care center directors, a review of the literature, and a review of federal and state standards for child care, are used as a basis for formulating a definition of policy and identifying parties responsible for policy formation. Suggested areas of operation for which written policy statements are advisable include ownership, purpose, goals, enrollment, parent participation, health requirements, financial arrangements, personnel, research, discipline and maintenance. The suggested policy formation process consists of the following steps: planning, definition, weighing the issue, formulating the statement, formal adoption, and identification of the consequences of policy in coordination with periodic policy review. (RH)

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PROCEDURES FOR DEVELOPING POLICY FOR NURSERY SCHOOLS AND DAY CARE CENTERS

EDUCATIONAL POLICY SYSTEMS

by

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"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

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ABSTRACT

The one area of Early Childhood Center operation that has been neglected is policy. The other facets of center operation such as standards for staff, physical plant, equipment, nutrition, sanitation, child-staff ratios, parent involvement, and curriculum have been upgraded in Illinois twice in the past ten years widening the gap between the skills and knowledge achieved by the profession in general and the lack of skills and knowledge in the area of policy. The need for policy and its application in Child Care centers as well as who should assume the responsibility in the absence of a governing board was explored. This was accomplished by reviewing the literature dealing with policy at all levels of education and by interviewing six directors of Child Care centers. The study identified eighteen areas of school operation that would benefit from written policy statements as well as six procedures to use in arriving at useful and meaningful policy. It was recommended that: 1. the study be incorporated into the Child Care administration and supervision course at Moraine Valley Community College, 2. the findings be published in ERIC, and 3. the findings be shared with others in the field at the N.A.E.Y.C. Annual Conference.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

At the present time most nursery schools and day care centers in the Moraine Valley Community College district are small privately run organizations. The majority of the centers are being operated by directors who have little or no formal training in administration. Out of six centers surveyed only two areas, discipline and fees had any formal written policy statements. The remaining areas operate with unwritten policy.

PURPOSE

This study investigated policy and its application in the earliest unit of the educational family, the nursery school or day care center. The need for policy at this level as well as who should assume the responsibility in the absence of a board was explored.

Grieder (1969) claims that the advantage of reducing policies to written form is that it tends to discourage ill-considered or faddish changes. Change should be founded on careful study and well-thought out proposals.

Policies are also established to ensure uniformity and consistency of action, which suggests in turn that policies are established on matters that recur or are likely to recur. Hay (1965) states that sound policies facilitate the accomplishment of the goals of an organization and Bowser (1976) claims policy serves a public relations function as well. Most educators agree that good policies enable school boards to decide how to handle the hot issues before they hit. According to the

American School Board Journal (1976) after a crisis erupts is hardly the time to be devising policy that pertains to the dilemma of the hour.

An example of crisis or instant policymaking did occur in August of 1977, when the Moraine Valley Community College's campus child care center was flooded with requests for registrations that exceeded the space available. Since no policy regarding registration existed, space was given out hastily on a first come, first serve basis. The result was confusion and upsetment. When it was discovered that several of the centers' oldest customers and most loyal volunteers did not arrive on campus in time to get space for their children, the problem was compounded. Evaluation and revision of the first come, first serve policy was forthcoming, but adequate preplanning and a written registration policy would have eliminated or at least minimized the registration problems.

PROBLEM

The 1978 revision of the licensing standards for Day and Night Care Centers in Illinois now requires new directors to earn either a minimum of 64 semester hours of college credit from an accredited college or university or an Associate of Arts Degree, with 18 hours in child related courses (Illinois Licensing Standards, 1978). These revised standards also state that the director shall be legally responsible to the Department of Children and Family Services for a description of the operating policies of the facility.

The effects of these new revisions will be felt to some degree during the summer of 1978. The real influx of students will occur in the fall of 1978 when

directors of existing schools in communities across the State of Illinois will be flocking to their local Community College expecting to find courses to help them meet their new responsibilities. Feedback from part time students currently enrolled in the administration course indicates that they want a set of step-by-step guidelines that will help them develop policy statements for their Child Care Centers. So, once again, the vocational student seemed to be saying, "Don't tell me, show me."

An examination of the required (Cherry, 1976) and supplemental text (Ruapp, 1973) being used in the Child Care program at Moraine Valley Community College (M.V.C.C.) revealed that the area of policy formation did not provide students with sufficient information to carry out the directive in the revised standards.

The problem for this study was to develop sufficient procedures and guidelines for policy making that would satisfy the needs of Child Care students at M.V.C.C. and the professionals in the Child Care community who look to M.V.C.C. for leadership in this area.

METHOD AND PROCEDURES

The first task was to arrive at a clear definition of policy by reviewing the literature.

The second task was to identify the areas of school operation that should be covered in written policy. This was accomplished by reviewing the literature and interviewing six nursery school directors.

The third task was to identify the need for written policy at the early childhood level and to identify the party or parties responsible for policy formation in the center. This was accomplished by reviewing the literature, interviewing six child care center

directors, and reviewing federal and state standards.

The final task was to review the literature dealing with policy and the interview data from the six child care facility directors in order to establish procedures for arriving at useful and meaningful policy.

Chapter 2

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

Since Head Start began, Illinois has amended the Chid Care Act three times; in 1969, in 1971 and finally in 1978. Each time the act was amended to raise the licensing standards for facilities for child care. Prior to 1969 a high school diploma was sufficient to own and opeate a preschool. The revision of 1969 recommended but did not require a two year associate degree for new directors and recommended six hours of college credit for teachers. The local community responded by initiating a Child Care program at Moraine Valley Community College (M.V.C.C.) as did other communities in the state.

As public awareness of the needs of young children grew, larger private as well as public centers opened. Non-profit Montessori schools operating with lay boards flourished in the Chicago metropolitan area as well as downstate. Colleges and universities added new courses, new majors and graduate study in the field.

All of this attention brought new insights into almost every aspect of child care except one--policy making. The plight of the young child is significantly better but the plight of the administrator in nursery schools and day care centers is still the same today as it was in 1950.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

One sentence is directed toward policy by Evans (1971) when she suggests that the director should have a significant voice if not final authority in policy-making decisions.

Ruapp (1973) defines policy as establishing an overall set of operating procedures for child care centers and includes setting up personnel policies for recruiting, hiring, and promoting staff. A second sentence suggests policies for child admissions, program content, staff training, career development, budgeting and financial reporting, and for basic center operations, such as hours open, fees, referrals, and so on.

Hess (1972) recognizes the fact that in small one owner centers the owner as the principal decision maker may not be a professional, especially if they acquired the center prior to laws requiring owners to have some professional training. As a result of the lack of training they generally operate with unwritten policies made in haste to solve problems as they arise.

In large children's centers policies may be established by boards, parent participation groups, teaching staff and/or state legislatures (Hess, 1972).

The National School Boards Association (1972) encourages written policy because well defined policy avoids such pitfalls as:

1. Instant policymaking. Decisions made by boards without the benefit of research, study, cool deliberation, due notice, or professional opinion.
2. Dictatorial policymaking. Policy made without the advice of counsel.
3. Illegal policymaking. Policy made without the advice of an attorney on matters where case law is still being written.
4. Sloppy policymaking. Policy written by an incompetent writer.
5. Contradictory policymaking. Policy written that contradicts past policy.

Grieder (1969) feels that every school should operate under a code of written policies. He claims that policy is the outcome of planning and governs the board itself

as well as the staff and should be derived from principles, facts and objectives relevant to the educational program.

The American School Board Journal (1976) states that a policy is a statement of action based on an ideal. Educational policies are broad guidelines that give direction to the entire operation of the school. Bowser (1976) claims that policy is a requirement or general statement of principle.

According to Campbell (1970) a policy statement either sets forth or implies the goal or objective and then gives the general path or outline that is to be followed in order to achieve the stated goal or objective. Sound policies, he feels, facilitate the accomplishment of those goals or objectives.

Hay (1965) elaborates further when he tells us that policy outlines the path to be followed and sets the general limits of action or establishes a standard. It is broader than a rule which is a specific guide to action. It is also more general than a procedure, which is a series of sequential steps. It is a general statement of a principal or a group of related principles that serves as a guide to action for a recurring situation and that facilitates the achievement of a goal.

According to the National School Boards Association (1972) written policies should: inform the public about the board's intent, goals and aspirations; give credence to board actions; establish a legal record; help eliminate personal or whimsical decision making. A soundly constructed school policy must contain two major elements: It should tell what the board wants to happen and explain why it should happen.

Policy means: (1) what the people who count say they are doing, (2) what they are actually doing, or (3) what they intend to do with the physical resources and people at their disposal (Strickland, 1968).

Some policies are intended to be implemented; some are symbolic; and some are prophetic. Policy is an idea with power. Ideas that provide check points to guide the actions and programs started by the administration. Once set, policies are hard to alter.

Many school boards have no end of headaches trying to verbalize the actual policies. It is a task that requires time, patience, and hard work.

Cherry (1976) states that nursery school and day care center directors who are asked to write or revise policy must:

1. Be courageous and stand up for what they believe in.
2. Be sensitive to program, facility and staff limitations.
3. Establish and understand priorities and be prepared to justify them to the Board.
4. Establish relationships with consultant-referral services.

In writing the policy statement, Cherry (1976) recommends that the following be included:

1. Statement of Name of Organization
2. Statement of Sponsorship/Ownership
3. Statement of Purpose
4. Statement of Goals (for the child, the parent, and the community)
5. Statement of Enrollment Policy
6. Statement of Responsibility of Nursery School Board
7. Statement of Staff Requirements
8. Statement of Parent Participation
9. Statement of Health Requirements

10. Statement of Classroom Procedures

11. Statement of Financial Arrangements

12. Statement of Personnel Policy

The size of the program doesn't matter when it comes to written policy. Stevens (1976) states unequivocally that an administrator will need to specify in written form those policies that affect the welfare of the employees as well as general policies for the operation of the center.

The employee policy should include:

1. The calendar for the current year, including the holidays that will be observed and all other important dates such as parent conferences and teacher meetings

2. Policies regarding sick and personal leave, including their accumulation and procedures to be followed in documenting their use

3. Descriptions of fringe benefits

4. Procedures and policies about employment, such as tenure and termination

5. Grievance procedures

6. Salary information, including range and criteria for pay increases

7. Job descriptions and the organizational chart

8. List of staff members by position

9. The bylaws of the organization

The general policies for the operation of the center should deal with admission, fees, discipline, absences, field trips, hours of operation, health requirements, transportation, grouping visitors and additional services offered such as lunches, snacks, and after school care.

INSTITUTIONAL AND MODULAR SIGNIFICANCE

One of the primary concerns of the Education Policy Systems module was the processes by which policies are developed at the institutional level (McCabe, 1973). This study involved the identification of processes that could and should be used to develop written policy in a Child Care facility. The investigation of policy and its application in the Child Care facility is not only applicable to the educational policy module, but urgent in view of the new state standards.

One of the objectives of the Child Care program at M.V.C.C. is to provide students with all the concepts and skills required by the State of Illinois to function as a director in a Child Care facility. New revisions of the Licensing Standards (1978) now require directors to display written policies for the operation of their centers. The results of this study, incorporated into the Child Care program, will meet this need.

Chapter 3

PROCEDURE

The first task was to review the literature dealing with policy at all levels of education in order to arrive at a clear definition of policy.

The second task was to identify the areas of school operation that should be covered in written policy. This was accomplished by reviewing the literature and asking the four directors of Child Care facilities to list the areas they either have written policy for or feel they need to cover in a written policy (Appendix A).

The third task was to identify the need for written policy at the early childhood level and to identify the party or parties responsible for policy formation in the center by reviewing the literature in Early Childhood Education, interviewing six Child Care facility directors (Appendix A), and reviewing federal and state regulations.

The final task was to review the literature dealing with policy and the interview data from the Child Care facility directors in order to establish procedures for arriving at useful and meaningful policy.

Chapter 4

RESULTS

The first task was to arrive at a clear definition of policy. A careful search of the literature identified the following definitions.

Policy is an overall set of operating procedures (Ruapp, 1973).

Policy is a broad guideline that gives direction to the operation of a school (American School Board Journal, 1976).

Policy sets forth the goal or objective and then gives the general path to be followed in order to achieve it (Campbell, 1970).

Policy outlines the path to be followed and sets the gneral limits of action or establishes a standard. It is broader than a rule which is a specific guide to action and more general than a procedure, which is a series of sequential steps (Hay, 1965).

The following clear and simple definition of policy for Child Care administrators was developed from the above four definitions and insights gained from the interviews with the practicing administrators.

Policy is a broad guidline that establishes the limits, objectives and standards that gives direction to the operation of the Child Care facility. Once the policy is written procedures are developed to carry it out.

The second task was to identify the areas of school operation that should be covered in written policy. A careful search of the literature and interviews with six Child Care directors (Appendix A) identified the following areas.

TABLE I

	Cherry	Stevens	Chicago	IL	U.S.A.	Directors
Sponsorship	x	x	x			x
Purpose	x	x	x	x	x	x
Goals for child, parent/ community	x			x	x	x
Board responsbility	x			x	x	x
Enrollment	x		x	x	x	x
Staff requirements	x	x	x	x	x	x
Parent participation	x	x	x	x	x	x
Financial arrangements	x	x	x	x	x	x
Personnel policies	x	x	x	x	x	x
Center procedures	x		x	x	x	x
Health requirements	x	x	x	x	x	x
Visitors and volunteers	x		x	x	x	x
Research				x		x
Purchasing					x	x
Publicity				x		x
Discipline				x		x
Building maintenance						x
Field trips	x		x	x	x	x

Sponsorship/Ownership

In writing the policy statement a statement identifying the sponsor or owner of the organization should be included. An example of such a policy statement is offered by Cherry (1976).

> This organization is a nonprofit, nonsectarian, interracial, and nonpolitical institution founded by the Community Services Club. No part of its earnings shall inure to the benefit of any member or individual. All funds earned by the school shall be reinvested in the school.

Purpose

Every Child Care facility needs a statement of purpose to provide parameters and direction for the staff and program. Cherry (1976) offers the following as an example of a statement of purpose for a single, non profit Child Care facility.

> The purpose of this organization shall be to provide a half-day nursery school and kindergarten program that will benefit the child, the parent, and the community.

Host (1971) gives us an example of a purpose that might be used by a large agency. However, most large agencies have access to consultants of all types in the formulation of their policy statements and do not depend on models as the small private center does.

Goals for Child, Parent and Community

Sponsors will find it beneficial to have a statement of goals for the child, parent and community, as the basis of the particular program they wish to develop.

Goals that express what programs expect to achieve with the child are similar to the following:

1. To develop a positive attitude toward school
2. To enjoy learning

3. To provide appropriate play experiences that contribute to the developmental needs of the child

4. To provide oral language experiences

5. To develop the ability to work and play with others

Statements dealing with parental expectations will be similar to these:

1. To develop an understanding of children's educational, emotional, and social and physical needs.

2. To develop rapport with school personnel and familiarity with school routines.

3. To develop the ability to assist children with learning experiences

4. To provide care for the child while the parents pursue their own interests

Statements related to the community might be something like this:

1. To help meet the needs of the community for an early childhood education facility

2. To contribute to the wholesome growth and development of the future citizens of the community

Board Responsibility

According to Host (1971) the board of directors has responsibility to the community, the parents, the staff, and the children. Most governing boards of child care programs have the following three primary responsibilities:

1. To establish, and continually re-examine and modify, the organization's policies

2. To assure adequate financial support for the organization

3. To interpret the organization's purposes, achievements and problems to the community

Policy statements dealing with the Board generally cover the following areas (Cherry, 1976; Host, 1971):

1. Board composition
2. Quorum
3. Eligibility
4. Number, time, day and location of meetings
5. Attendance
6. Selection of officers
7. Committees
8. Amendments
9. Terms

Enrollment

Clearly written enrollment policies help both the staff and parents understand the criteria for admission. This should include the child's readiness for separation from his parents, child's age and health, with requirements for health records outlined, policies regarding attendance, withdrawal, reentry, and dismissal and finally policy regarding the maximum of children in the program.

McCabe (1973) claims that policy decisions at any level are made within a framework of certain external constraints. Policy statements regarding the maximum number of children in the program are handed down by the state or federal agency licensing and/or funding the center. In some instances centers, such as those housed in Chicago, have

policies imposed upon them by city, state and federal agencies as well as parent and community groups.

Several examples of enrollment policy statements are:

1. Children will be accepted on a first come first serve basis regardless of sex, color or creed as long as space is available in the center

2. A certificate of good health, signed by a physician, is required at the time the child is admitted to the school. Such a certificate may also be required before reentrance by a child after any lenthy or serious communicable disease.

Staff Requirements

Clearly written policy statements will help the staff to understand the conditions under which he/she works. Host (1971) and Suyler (1976) believe that staff morale, stability and effectiveness depend upon the extent to which it knows, accepts, and can rely upon its employment conditions. Furthermore, governing bodies should be sure about what it demands of its employees.

Areas usually covered in personnel policies are:

1. Length of work day and work week
2. Holidays that are taken with pay
3. Sick leave provisions, including some statement about leave not used
4. Vacation time, including a statement about time not used
5. Fringe benefits offered and how they are paid for
6. Tenure provisions, including probationary period, if one is required
7. Resignation and termination procedures
8. Grievance procedure

9. Educationaland training leave

10. Reimbursable expenses

11. Health and medical requirements

12. Basis of wage and salary calculation

13. Staff development, conferences and parent teacher meetings

14. Evaluation, promotion, and raises

Several examples of personnel policy statements are:

> Salary increases shall be commensurate with increased enrollment, income, duties, and responsibilities of any employee, upon agreement between the Director and the Board (Cherry, 1976).

Attendance at regularly scheduled and emergency staff mettings outside of regular working hours is compulsary.

Parent Participation

Parent participation is based on the belief that day care is supportive of family life and should never be considered a substitute for it (Syler, 1976). Parents are the child's primary caregiver and as such should have a voice in the formulation of program policy.

According to Host (1971) Day Care programs are always partnerships with parents. Each must understand and reinforce the other.

Steven's (1976) believes that the development and careful use of informal and formal channels of communication between the Center and the home is basic to all early childhood education programs.

In fact, most federally funded programs view parent participation as an opportunity to expose parents to effective parenting techniques as well as involvement in program planning for the center.

Several examples of parent participation policy statements are as follows:

1. Three parents who have children enrolled in the center shall be members of the Advisory Board

2. A $5 tuition credit shall be given to each parent for each three hours of service to the center

3. At least one parent must be present at each of the four parent education workshops sponsored by the center

Statement of Health Requirements

Every day care program in Illinois is required by law to have on file a medical report on each child prior to their enrollment.

Examples of policy statements dealing with health requirements are:

1. All staff members and volunteers, including participating parents, shall present a certificate of good health and negative tuberculin test before spending any time at the center on a regular basis (Cherry, 1976).

2. A child who feels ill must be provided with a rest area separate from the remainder of the children until the child's parent or guardian arrive to take the child home (Syler, 1976).

3. A medical report shall be on file for each child dated not longer than 6 months prior to enrollment and signed by the examining physician or certified by a recognized health facility (Illinois Licensing Standards, 1978).

Statement of Center Procedures

Clearly written classroom procedures will help the parents and the staff to understand the conditions of enrollment such as the type of grouping used, the hours of attendance and the number of days involved.

Several examples of procedure statements are:

1. The center shall be open five days a week from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday, except for legal holidays.

2. Children may attend 2, 3, 4 or 5 days per week.

3. The children shall be initially assigned to a class according to age. As the year progresses, children may be transferred to one group or another according to their individual needs.

4. The daily schedule will be as follows unless the best interests of the children determine otherwise:

7 a.m. - 9 a.m.	Free play out of doors (weather permitting)
9 a.m. - 9:45	Language Development
9:45 - 10:30	Arts and Crafts
10:30 - 11:00	Snacktime
11:00 - 11:30	Motor Development
11:30 - 12:00	Discovery Time in Science
12:00 - 1:00	Lunchtime
1:00 - 1:15	Storytime
1:15 - 3:15	Naptime
3:15 - 3:45	Wake up time
3:45 - 4:15	Snacktime
4:15 - 6 p.m.	Free play out of doors (weather permitting)

Statement of Financial Arrangements

It is extremely important according to Suyler (1976) for parents to understand how their fees are determined. A clearly written statement on fee policies should be presented to each family. It should explain how charges are determined, what fee adjustments may be made and why, when parents will be billed and whom they are to pay.

Statement of Personnel Policy

Working with people is probably the most challenging aspect of the director's job. Good staff relations, clear delegation of responsibility, and open communication help to assure programs are effective. Inequities in personal leave policies, lack of clarity about job responsibilities, and short circuited communication channels can quickly sabotage a program (Stevens, 1976).

Regardless of size of the program, a director should specify in written form those policies that affect the welfare of the staff. Every staff member should have a personal copy of the policy. The following should be included:

1. The calendar for the current year, including holidays, staff meeting days and any other special event days that affect the staff members routine in some way
2. Policies regarding personal leave, sick leave and vacation leave, including the prerequisite conditions, number of days involved and procedures to be followed in documenting their use
3. Descriptions of any and all benefits the program provides
4. Salary information, including ranges, criteria for pay increases, and placement on the salary schedule
5. Procedures and policies about employment, covering items such as tenure, probation, resignation and termination of employment by employer
6. Grievance procedures
7. Job descriptions and organizational chart
8. Hours of duty per day
9. In-service training
10. Staff meetings

11. Employment period

12. Health requirements

Visitors and Volunteers

Centers that are located near high schools or colleges that have Early Childhood programs will receive many requests from students for permission to visit the center or to volunteer some of their time to interact with the children. According to all six center directors interviewed, a great deal of confusion can be avoided if written policies are developed to guide this type of interaction.

Research

Centers that are housed in or located close by a University or College will also need a definite policy regarding the use of the children for research and publicity.

If the above schools have training programs for the development of child care workers, the center will need guidelines for observers, volunteers, and interns.

Parents frequently feel more comfortable about enrolling their child in a center if they are permitted to observe the program prior to registration. Policies regarding this type of visitation are needed to afford the staff and children currently enrolled some measure of privacy.

Publicity

The policies regarding publicity should cover the use of children in publicity designed to enhance the image of the center in the community or to promote enrollment.

Purchasing

Skillful management of purchasing and distributing of supplies and equipment is very important to the overall success of the program.

Day Care organizations require many items from a very wide range of sources. Most

day care organizations' needs are as varied as those of large corporations, although the quantities required will probably not be as great.

Policies regarding vendor selection, bids, cash on hand, purchase orders, charge accounts, quantity, quality and persons authorized to make purchases will be necessary to guide purchasing effectively.

Discipline

The Illinois Licensing Standards (1978) require every center to have a written discipline policy. They specifically ask for simple, understandable rules that will set the limits of behavior required for the protection of the group and the individuals within it.

Building and Grounds Maintenance

All six of the center directors stressed the importance of written policies and procedures for building and grounds maintenance. Emergencies require immediate attention that can't wait for a board meeting to receive attention.

Field Trips

The six center directors also stressed the need for written policies and procedures dealing with field trips. The Illinois licensing standards recommend occasional field trips out into the community and the children thoroughly enjoy them, but policies need to be written to guide the movement of children from sheltered centers out into the less sheltered community.

The following is an example of a policy statement dealing with field trips:

Every child must have a permission slip signed by his parents on file in the school before he or she leaves the school premises. The permission slip must include the date, the time of day, the place, the mode of transportation and the purpose of the field trip.

The third task was to identify the need for written policy at the early childhood level and to identify the party or parties responsible for policy formation in the center.

A careful search of the literature reveals that most authors make no distinction between the need for policy at various leves of education. All organizations, if they are to run smoothly, must have written guidelines. The advantage, according to (Grieder (1969) is that it tends to discourage ill-considered or faddish changes and promote change founded on careful study and well-though out proposals. Hay (1965) feels that policies establish uniformity and consistency of action and Bowser (1976) states that sound policy facilitate the accomplishment of an organization's goals. The American School Board (1976) is more specific when it states that policies enable the responsible parties to handle the hot issues before they hit.

Illinois, in the state licensing standards (1978), mandates policy in certain areas of Child Care center operation (Table 1). The federal government (Host, 1971) in their administration manual for community groups interested in establishing early childhood programs, requires a Board to direct the program and well-developed and clearly written policy.

All six of the directors interviewed claim that clearly written policy statements would make their jobs much easier and eliminate hard feelings and conflict among staff members who misunderstand unwritten policy. In every case, the only policies the directors had in writing was a policy on discipline because it was required by their licensing representative at their last evaluation and a policy statement regarding late payment of tuition. Otherwise all policies were informal, unwritten responses to a crisis. One director called it bandaid diplomacy.

The party responsible for setting policy whether it was written or unwritten was the owner in the case of the private school and the Board of Directors in government, church, or group sponsored centers.

The final task, a review of the literature, and interview data from the Child Care facility directors, identified the following procedures for arriving at useful and meaningful policy.

Initiation or Planning

According to Campbell (1970) this is the humble beginning of the process, the problem identifier. The process can begin when a problem issue arises in the operation of the school; a personal whim of a staff or board member; or by a decision of the state governing body.

The planning that precedes policy formation where the goals and objectives of the educational program are defined (Grieder, 1969).

The process can also begin when an owner or director makes the decision to operate with written policy that has the benefit of research and deliberation rather than instant policymaking or dictatorial policymaking.

Selection or Definition

The process of identifying with some clarity what the problem is, and defining the problem (Campbell, 1970).

The Child Care center directors claim that this is the process of selecting areas of school operation that would function more efficiently with written policy.

Deliberation or Weighing the Issue

The process of raising alternatives to resolve the issue and as a result possibly re-defining the problem. In this process movement back and forth from defining the problem to raising alternatives, is common as is the effort to seek new information and the reviewing

of existing information (Campbell, 1969). According to Grieder (1969), policy should be founded on careful study and well thought out proposals.

The Policy Statement

A general statement of a principal or a group of related principles that serves as a guide to action (Hay, 1965).

The National School Board Association (1972) states that written policy must contain two major elements: it should tell what the owner or board wants to happen and explain why it should happen.

Verbalizing policies is a task that requires time, patience, and hard work.

Cherry (1976) suggests that a consultant be retained to assist in the actual writing of the policies to insure that the wording is clear and accurately communicates the board's intent.

Adoption

The formal process of adoption by the board or owner.

Consequences/Review

The process of policy making does not end with the enactment or official decision. The consequences that actually issue from the decision must be examined in the light of the expected consequences. If the consequences are not favorable, the policy must be revised. Review of former policy should occur on a regular basis to be certain that the old policy is still accomplishing the task it was formulated to do (Campbell, 1970).

Chapter 5

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The eighteen areas of school operation identified as needing coverage by written policy statements and the six procedures arrived at for establishing useful and meaningful policy represents a good beginning for owners, Boards of Directors, and administrators in the Child Care field. More professionalism in this area is evident in the increased qualifications for staff and programs. Administration cannot and should not lag behind. As research in the early years increased after the birth of Head Start, the size and numbers of early childhood programs increased. Administrative expertise filtered down into federally funded programs that had more access to consultants but the small privately-owned center and the church-related center lagged behind.

Implications

Since consultants are not within the framework of budgetary possibility for administrators of programs denied access to federal or state funds these administrators must depend upon other avenues to acquire the skills of good administration. One of the avenues open to them is their local community college. If the smooth and efficient operation of the Child Care center is important to parents, children, and staff, then written policy to effect that type of operation is necessary and adminstrators need to be trained in the art of policy formulation. Once this training is acquired, the Child Care community will have achieved the final ingredient necessary to acquire the professionalism it deserves.

The status of Child Care in the past was closely related to the respect and esteem granted any fifty-cents-an-hour high school baby sitter. Most centers were staffed by high school graduates or persons with less than a high school diploma if they demonstrated

a warm, motherly personality. Most of the progress in the last twenty years has dealt with the upgrading of staff qualifications, and the raising of standards dealing with the physical plant, equipment, parent education and curriculum. Since these areas most directly affect the children, it was appropriate that they should receive attention first. Now, however, it is time for the focus to shift to the adminstrative aspects of child care.

Recommendations

The first recommendation is to incorporate into M.V.C.C.'s Child Care administration and supervision course the areas of coverage for policy and the procedures to follow in arriving at clearly written policy. The current and future administrators who are enrolled in this course can benefit from this knowledge.

The second recommendation is to submit the document to ERIC for publication so that others may benefit from the study.

The last recommendation is to present a workshop on policy at the annual meeting of the National Association For The Education of Young Children to be held in New York City on August 17-20, 1978, so that adminstrators with little or no access to college courses in adminstration might avail themselves of the opportunity to engage in independent learning and at least be exposed to the concept of written policy as a means to more efficient operation of their center. And finally, the possiblity that an awareness of the value of policy in the efficient operation of a center, might stimulate administrators to enroll in a course at their local community college, for an in-depth experience is always present.

APPEXDIX A

NAME _____

DATE _____

1. Does your center operate with written policies?

   Yes ____ No 6

2. Are you, as director, responsible for the policies (written or unwritten) that guide the operation of the center?

   Yes 3 No. 3

   If your answer is no, who is responsible?

   Owner 2 Board 1

3. In the first two columns, mark the areas of center operation that you feel should or shouldn't be covered with written policy statements. Add any that you feel should be included. In the third column, mark any areas that you already cover with written policy.

	Yes	No	Areas Covered By Policy
Sponsorship/Ownership	6		
Purpose	6		
Goals for child, parent and community	6		
Board Responsibility	1	5	
Attendance	6		
Parent Participation	6		6
Financial Arrangements	4	2	
Personnel Policies	6		
Center Procedures	6		
Health Requirements	6		

	Yes	No	Areas Covered By Policy
Visitors and Volunteers	4	2	
Research	2	4	
Purchasing	6		
Publicity	5	1	
Discipline	6		6
Building Maintenance	6		
Field Trips	4	2	

4. Mark the procedures you or your center use to establish policy.

	Yes	No
Identify the problem		6
Research the problem		6
Explore alternate solutions		6
Consultation (staff, parents or professional consultant)		6
Put it in writing	6*	
Trial application	6*	
Rework if necessary	6*	
On-the-spot decision to solve existing problem	3	3
Most policies unwritten	6	

*This response referred exclusively to the discipline policy the state mandated and the fee policy survival depended upon.

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